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REPORT SEES 'PROXY FORCE MENTALITY' IN CONTRAS  
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WASHINGTON

Nicaraguan insurgents fighting the leftist Sandinista government still suffer from a "proxy force mentality" and lack of effective leadership that, if not corrected, could make increased U.S. aid futile, according to a study prepared by two supporters of the Contras.

The eight-page paper, entitled "From a Proxy Force to a National Liberation Movement," says that to challenge the Soviet-supplied Nicaraguan army, the rebels need anti-aircraft missiles and other sophisticated weapons from the United States along with expert training in how to use them.

But the report says the Contra rebels also must broaden their political base by developing ties to the country's internal opposition and seeking diplomatic support.

"It would be the most profound irresponsibility to train and equip guerrilla fighters for a mission that is essentially futile," it said. "So long as their military operations rest upon so narrow a political base, the capacities of the insurgents will be gravely weakened."

The report is being circulated at top levels of the United Nicaraguan Opposition, UNO, the rebels' chief umbrella group, and within the Reagan administration, which is asking Congress for \$100 million in aid, about 70 percent of it in the form of military assistance, to the rebels.

It was written by Bruce Cameron, a former congressional aide who played an important behind-the-scenes role in winning non-lethal aid for the rebels last year, and Penn Kemble, who works with PRODEMCA, a private group that has administered federal grants in Central America.

The report's assessments conform with the views of many Nicaraguan exiles who complain that UNO has failed to resolve the deep divisions that have plagued the Contra war effort. One well-placed administration official, who insisted on anonymity, described the report's observations as "on the mark."

Sen. Richard Lugar, R-Ind., Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman, has said UNO must prove "it is the legitimate political leader of the Contras" for Reagan's \$100 million aid request to have any hope in Congress.

The independent report, however, argues that the Contra movement needs overhaul before it can mount a serious challenge to the Sandinista government.

"The 'proxy force' mentality lingers on in the insurgents' leadership - a mentality that leads to caution, dependency and, perhaps, the unspoken expectation that sooner or later their U.S. patron will come in to do the job itself," the report said.

It also criticizes the command structure of the CIA-organized Nicaraguan Democratic Force, FDN, the largest rebel army, as "still heavily influenced by figures from Nicaragua's old order." The report adds that the Contras' "lack of technical competency" makes supplying large numbers of sophisticated weapons difficult.

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The Contras also have failed to merge their effort with political opposition forces still inside Nicaragua, the report said.

"It is not so much that the U.S. supports the insurgency, as it is that the insurgency is a creature of the U.S.," it said.

Cameron and Kemble recommended that the Contras "strengthen the democratic character" of the movement, giving UNO's civilian leadership "full and effective command over all military forces and political activities."

They also say rebel forces operating near the Costa Rican border should be brought "into a close working relationship with UNO," which now is dominated by the Honduran-based FDN. They add that the Contras respect for human rights "must begin in earnest."

Further, the report suggests "a high-level, bipartisan and broadly representative citizens' commission to act as a liaison agency between the United States and Nicaragua's insurgents."

While noting that the Contras need anti-aircraft missiles and other sophisticated military hardware to challenge the Sandinista army, the report adds that "as it stands today, it seems unlikely that the resistance can achieve much against the Sandinistas, even with substantial U.S. military assistance."

"But if military assistance is given and at the same time firm steps are taken to strengthen the social and political character of the resistance and to overcome its diplomatic isolation, its prospects will be greatly improved - and military assistance can be justified," it said.